

uses must be compatible with the primary purpose or purposes for which the refuge was established. It sets up a sensible, consistent, and public process for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's managers to follow in making compatibility determinations, and it adopts the Fish and Wildlife Service's longstanding regulatory standard for compatibility.

The bill reiterates the specific categories of wildlife-dependent recreation found in Executive Order 12996 that are to be considered as the "priority public uses" for the refuge system: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. Where compatible, refuge managers are to provide increased opportunities for these uses and enhance the attention they receive in refuge management and planning.

Finally, H.R. 1420 maintains the historic Refuge System policy that refuges are "closed until open." That is, in order to ensure that wildlife needs come first, existing refuge lands and waters are closed to public uses until they are specifically opened for such uses. Also as provided in Executive Order 12996, the bill establishes a new process for identifying compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities prior to

the acquisition of new refuge areas, thereby avoiding the temporary closure of ongoing compatible recreational activities.

This bill is the result of extensive negotiations by my Administration, the Congress, and environmental and sportmen's groups. Starting from widely differing positions, they worked intensively to reach the compromise reflected in this legislation. The bill is proof that when there is a shared commitment to do what is right for our natural resources, partisan and ideological differences can be set aside and compromises can be negotiated for the benefit of the common good. It is clearly the most significant conservation legislation to emerge from this Congress to date. I hope and trust the process by which this bill was enacted will serve as a model for future congressional action on other environmental measures.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
October 9, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 1420, approved October 9, was assigned Public Law No. 105-57.

## **Statement on Signing the Oklahoma City National Memorial Act of 1997** *October 9, 1997*

I am pleased to sign today S. 871, the "Oklahoma City National Memorial Act of 1997." This Act establishes the Oklahoma City National Memorial as a unit of the National Park System to recognize the profound changes brought to so many lives on the tragic morning of April 19, 1995.

The significance of the tragedy of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and the meaning and implications of this event for our Nation, compel the establishment of this memorial as a visible and prominent national shrine. After the bombing, I proclaimed a National Day of Mourning for those lost in the tragedy. The people of the United States prayed for them and their community as we gathered in our places of worship around the country. When I traveled to Oklahoma City to participate in a memorial service

for the bombing victims, I pledged to do all I could to help heal the injured, to rebuild the city, and to stand by the people of Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma City Memorial Foundation has done a tremendous job of involving the public, defining its mission and goals, and holding a design competition for the memorial. Building upon these local efforts, this Act establishes the Oklahoma City Memorial Trust to manage the memorial. This Trust, a Federal Government corporation, will operate within the Department of the Interior in cooperation with the National Park Service to ensure the fulfillment of the obligations and requirements of the laws and policies that govern units of the National Park Systems (NPS).

Through the partnership, the National Park Service will provide technical assistance to the

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Trust for 2 years, after which time the Trust will reimburse the Park Service for any further services. As part of this partnership, it is my expectation that the National Park Service will establish a position of superintendent or site manager to work closely with the Trust in managing this NPS unit.

Section 5(v)(1) of S. 871 vests the powers and management of the Trust in a Board of Directors consisting of the Secretary of the Interior and eight other members appointed by the President. These Presidential appointments would be made from names submitted by the Governor of Oklahoma, the Mayor of Oklahoma City, and the Oklahoma congressional delega-

tion. Because the Constitution does not permit limiting the executive branch's appointment power by requiring nominations from lists of recommendations, I will regard any lists submitted pursuant to that section as advisory.

I commend all those who worked so hard to memorialize the lives of the innocent victims of the Oklahoma City bombing.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
October 9, 1997.

NOTE: S. 871, approved October 9, was assigned Public Law No. 105-58.

## Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 1997

*October 9, 1997*

Warm greetings to all those observing Yom Kippur.

On this most solemn of Jewish holy days, Jews across America and around the world acknowledge the transgressions of the past year and come before God to atone for their sins. It is a time to rectify mistakes, to repair broken bonds between family members, friends, and neighbors, and to reaffirm their sacred covenant with God. Rich with tradition and ritual, observed with strict fasting and devout prayer, the Day of Atonement offers the Jewish people a powerful reminder to begin the new year by seeking what is most important: the mercy of God and the forgiveness of those whom they may have failed.

As our nation embarks upon a season of renewal and reconciliation, Americans of all faiths can learn from the lessons of Yom Kippur. By acknowledging the divisions among us and seeking forgiveness from one another for past injuries and mistakes, we can strengthen our families, communities, and nation and enter the future as a more compassionate and united people.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a blessed Yom Kippur.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 9.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

*October 9, 1997*

Thank you. Only a fool would speak after both a Baptist minister and a rabbi. *[Laughter]* Thank you, Steve. And I thank Vernon and Ann for having us here. Hillary and I and Chelsea, we've been here a lot over the last several years. This has often been a home away from home and on occasion, in difficult times, a real refuge for us. This is the largest crowd with whom

I have ever dined in this room, with the fewest number of people related to Vernon and Ann. *[Laughter]* But we're all family in a way here, and I thank you for being here.

I thought what might be good to do tonight is maybe I would just talk a couple of minutes and follow up on something that Vernon and Steve talked about, and then see if any of you